



## **Employee Travel Policy**

Effective July 1, 2017

(Updated January 1, 2018)

The South Carolina Public Charter School District's (District's) mission is to improve student learning and increase learning opportunities in South Carolina through the creation of innovative, high quality charter schools. Ultimately, the District strives to assist South Carolina in achieving academic excellence. As a statewide school district, employees of the District may be required to travel across the state of South Carolina and beyond to help the District achieve its mission. **The travel policies below are designed to be fair to employees while also promoting good stewardship of taxpayer money.**

## 1. Meals

### ***In-State Travel:***

Meals may be reimbursed for actual expenditures incurred up to the state of South Carolina's meal allowance when an employee is traveling on official District business and is in *travel status* (more than 10 miles from official headquarters and/or residence). It is the District's policy to not reimburse employees for one-day meals. The District also does not reimburse employees for meals while on travel in Columbia, SC as that is the District's and employees' principle place of business. In determining the maximum amount of subsistence for meals which may be reimbursed, the following time schedule must be adhered to:

MEALS	DEPART BEFORE	RETURN AFTER	IN-STATE
Breakfast	6:30 AM	11:00AM	\$ 6.00
Lunch	11:00 AM	1:30 PM	\$ 7.00
Supper	5:15 PM	8:30 PM	\$12.00
DAILY MAXIMUM ALLOWANCE			\$25.00

### ***Out-of-State Travel:***

While traveling out of state on official District business, an employee will be reimbursed for actual expenditures up to the federal government's meal per diem rate. For meal per diem rates, see [www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877](http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877). If a meal is included in a conference fee or is provided with the cost of lodging, an employee shall not request reimbursement for the standard meal allowance. *Receipts for meals are required.* The meal reimbursement rate includes tips associated with the meal. In certain circumstances, employees may find it necessary to spend beyond the federal meal per diem rate while on travel out of state. Any request for additional reimbursement beyond the federal rate shall be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor and the Chief Financial Officer for approval.

## 2. Lodging

The District will pay for hotel lodging in advance for attendance at a conference, seminar, or workshop. All lodging should be booked using a District-owned credit card, and preferably booked by the Office Administrator. If an employee elects to book his/her lodging expenses on his/her personal credit card, then the employee will not be reimbursed for the lodging expenses until return from travel. Hotel reimbursements for one-day meetings will not be reimbursed unless arrangements have been approved by the employee's immediate supervisor to lodge the night before the conference/training. Overnight travel that will exceed the federal lodging rate must be submitted for approval by the Chief Financial

Officer (CFO) prior to the trip. The employee must provide a justification explaining why that hotel was selected. Federal lodging rates can be found at the per diem rates link above.

### **3. Rental Car (Effective January 15, 2018)**

The District has a partnership agreement with Enterprise Rent-A-Car to provide short-term transportation for District employees on official District business at a discounted rate. The District expects all employees to take advantage of this partnership whenever it is economically feasible while traveling on District business *which includes office-to-office travel for those employees living outside of the Columbia metropolitan area*. The District defines economically feasible for rental car usage as the following:

1. Traveling more than 90 miles roundtrip in a one day.
2. Traveling 250 miles or more for a time period of 3 or more days.

*The District expects that an employee utilize a rental car for any travel falling under the two situations listed above.* Each employee is responsible for making his/her own rental car reservations under the District's account with approval of his/her supervisor. Each employee should reserve a "Standard" vehicle or one of equal or lesser value. The daily rate of the vehicle should not exceed \$40.00 before taxes and fees. *If an employee chooses not to use a rental car when traveling on official business, the employee will only be reimbursed a maximum of \$40 per day (the equivalent cost of a car rental).* As part of the District's partnership agreement with Enterprise, employees should not have to refill the rental car with gas; however, if an employee must do so, the gas expenditure is reimbursable. *In this instance, receipts for gas are required.*

Upon returning the vehicle after travel, the employee should obtain the rental receipt (and gas receipt if applicable and upload to Expensify as a non-reimbursable expense.

In addition to employees, the District does allow for consultants and interviewees to use Enterprise Rent-A-Car under the District's account if the individual is solely on District business during the time period during which the vehicle is in his/her possession. It is the responsibility of the District employee who engaged the consultant to make rental car reservations and obtain receipts and forward them to Accounts Payable.

If it is more economically feasible for an employee to use his/her personal vehicle - such as traveling less than 90 miles roundtrip in one day or less than 250 miles over a 3-day period - an employee may claim mileage reimbursement at the federal reimbursement rate. The District will not reimburse employees for travel less 20 miles roundtrip. When calculating the roundtrip mileage, the employee should use the closer of the employee's home address or principal place of business as the starting address.

### **3. Former Office-to-Office Travel (Now Superseded by the Rental Car Policy above):**

**Effective January 15, 2018, the District's Office-to Office Travel policy is replaced by the Rental Car Policy detailed above.** *The old policy read as follows:* The District's principal place of business and only registered office location is 3710 Landmark Drive, Suite 201, Columbia, SC 29204. The District allows employees to live and work from whatever city they may choose but recognizes that all employees' principal place of employment is Columbia, South Carolina. The District may require employees to be

present in the Columbia office for staff meetings, board meetings and other events for which the employees will be reimbursed for mileage at the full federal rate, set at \$.535 per mile as of July 1, 2017. (This rate is revised at the Federal level every January). The District will pay for lodging for employees traveling to Columbia for various meetings, conferences, and other events when deemed necessary. The District will not reimburse employees for meal expenses incurred while traveling to Columbia. It is the District's policy that any employee staying in Columbia overnight is doing so by choice and not as a requirement of the job, the same as employees choosing to live in other cities when their principal place of employment is Columbia, SC.

#### **4. Expensify (Effective for all expenditures incurred after January 1, 2018)**

All reimbursable employee expenditures should be submitted through the online platform Expensify. Each expense should detail which fund, function, and object the expense relates to as well as describe the purpose of the expense in the comment section. Expense reports should be submitted to supervisors on a monthly basis. *Employees should submit their monthly expense report by 5:00pm on the 3rd<sup>th</sup> business day of each month. Supervisors and Managers should approve expense reports by 5:00 p.m. on the 5<sup>th</sup> business day of each month. The Finance Department will reimburse expenses on the 7<sup>th</sup> business day of each month. Any expense reports not properly submitted and approved on time will not be reimbursed until the following month.*

Please note that the policies stated above are not intended to be all inclusive, but rather provide clarification as to where the District travel policy differs from that of the South Carolina Department of Education. In any circumstances or situations not covered above, please refer to the South Carolina Department of Education's travel policy found at the following link: <https://ed.sc.gov/finance/fiscal-accounting/travel/travel-policy/>.

#### **Finance Department Contacts**

##### **Siddhartha Chowdri**

Chief Financial Officer

803-908-2680

[schowdri@sccharter.org](mailto:schowdri@sccharter.org)

##### **Jeremy Richardson, CPA**

Director of Finance

803-608-4743

[jrichardson@sccharter.org](mailto:jrichardson@sccharter.org)

##### **Takeya Jackson**

Finance Assistant

[tjackson@sccharter.org](mailto:tjackson@sccharter.org)